



Chinese ambassador makes special visit to UNO Wednesday

JOSIE LOZA
NEWS EDITOR

Nearly 75 people filled the William H. Thompson Alumni center to hear the Chinese ambassador to the United States speak at UNO Wednesday.

Ambassador Yang Jiechi made the special visit to the campus after speaking to the Downtown Rotary Club.

U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, issued the invitation to Jiechi earlier this year.

Hagel felt the program was very important not only for the UNO community but also for the city.

"These types of visits help to deepen and expand cultural and economic ties and understanding between our two countries," he said.

The ambassador opened his speech by telling the group: "I have special sentimental ties with this university."

Jiechi said that his friendship with former UNO Chancellor Ronald Roskens dates back to two decades. Roskens, who served as chancellor from 1972-77, sat near the front row.

"I want to renew the old friendships and make new friends," Jiechi said.

Ambassador Jiechi has served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the United States since 2001. He served as a staff member and second secretary at the Translation and Interpretation Department of China's Foreign Ministry from



photo by Chris Machian

The ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the United States, Yang Jiechi, answers questions during his stop at UNO Wednesday.

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Students make preparations as finals approach

LEIA BAEZ
STAFF WRITER

With less than three days until finals week begins, the library is filling up, professors are making more appointments and some students are opening their books for the first time all semester.

But for many students who maintain a part- or full-time job as well as study at the university full-time, finals week is the most stressful week of the semester.

"With work and classes, I am so stressed out," Margie Lara said. "I am just thankful my job is lenient with my work hours so I can take more time off during finals week."

Lara said she is nervous about a few of her finals that are cumulative because they will have a large effect on her final grade.

"I am actually more nervous because I don't know what to expect since this is my first year in college," she said. "But I plan on speaking with a few of my professors to get extra help."

Help is everywhere for students, especially during the last two weeks of the semester.

Melissa Cast, a reference librarian at University Library, said the library makes special arrangements to accommodate students' busy schedules during dead

and finals weeks.

"We are double-staffing on the busier days so we can provide more assistance to students and prevent long lines," Cast said. "Also, if students are looking into a group study, they can reserve a room on the upper levels of the library."

Cast also said that since last spring, no cell phones or pagers are allowed in the library during dead and finals week and they are never allowed on the third floor.

Another accommodation the library is providing during finals week is longer hours. Starting Sunday, the library hours are as follows: Sunday, noon to midnight, Monday through Thursday 7 a.m. to midnight and Friday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. The library will be closed Saturday and will not reopen until Thursday, Jan. 2.

However, studying in the library is not for everyone. Many students find the library distracting because they may run into friends and end up chatting.

"I usually use the library for assignments and that's about it because I live so far away," freshman Tamara Grove said.

Grove said she finds studying more effective when she studies in a quiet and designated place in her house and takes "brain breaks."

Sophomore Jenny Baber said she

has helpful study habits of her own.

"I have to eat when I am studying and it has to be completely quiet," Baber said. "Also, I definitely have to start early because I usually don't have time the night before and I get stressed out."

But starting to study early isn't exactly the route for some students. Dead week for some students is also known as "cramming week." However, cramming is not exactly the most effective strategy to studying.

"Any studying will benefit, but I do not recommend cramming," library graduate assistant Stefanie Armstrong said.

Armstrong, who teaches study skills to students, has a few study tips that may help you make the grade:

- Get enough rest before tests
- Make sure you have a full stomach and enough energy before a test
- Create mnemonics to help memorize information
- Contact professors for additional help
- Participate in study groups
- Rewrite notes and become more organized
- Study in increments, not long hours
- Take study breaks
- Don't get comfortable when studying. Stay alert and focused

Student Government ends semester with social, meeting

KRISTIN ZAGURSKI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

International students had the opportunity to socialize with Student Government members Thursday night as the Student Government held its first-ever international students and Student Government social.

Jono Croskey, director of legislative and public relations for Student Government, said a recent Vice Chancellor's Student Leadership Council meeting inspired the event.

International students at the meeting spoke to the group of student leaders about their experiences and concerns. A common problem among the international students was a feeling of being unwelcome.

After the meeting, "A little light bulb went off in my head," Croskey said. Soon after, he began planning the social.

"There's really no agenda besides friendship," Croskey said.

He said he hoped through the social, Student Government members could develop relationships with international students.

The international students and Student Government members socialized over veggies, pizza and sodas from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursday. Croskey said through the social, the international students got to know the Student Government members a little better and see what their organization is all about.

Croskey said he hopes now when international students see Student Government members on campus they will say, "What's up?" or give them high fives.

"We should know all the different types of students on campus and make them feel welcome," he said.

Student Government also had its last meeting of the semester Thursday night.

It was Shay Riggs' last meeting as student body president/regent. She is graduating next week. However, due to a work conflict, Riggs was not able to attend the meeting. She gave her last report via videotape.

Riggs said she is "a little disappointed" she could not make it to the last meeting, but she had to prioritize.

As a family support worker for Visinet, Inc., Riggs deals a lot with people's lives hands-on. Thursday night she was working with a family on a goodbye visit. It was the last time the mother saw her children for a long time.

"I thought it was more important that I do that as opposed to come to the meeting," Riggs said.

Riggs will continue working for Visinet, Inc. after graduation, which she said she is looking forward to.

"I have to admit, I'm very tired," Riggs said. "... I really need a break."

Looking back at her time in office and at UNO, Riggs said she wouldn't change a thing she did.

"I know a lot of people were disappointed that Damien Coran was not our president/regent, but I just want to let everyone know that everything Damien and I said we'd do we did do," she said. "Even though he was not in office, his ideas were carried out."

She said she was especially proud she and Coran's vision of Student Government participating in community service was realized.

Riggs said her experience on Student Government has helped shape her personality to an extent. It has taught her to be more responsible and organized.

"I've learned so many different things the list just goes on and on," she said.

Spread some holiday cheer . . .



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UNO jazzes up commencement

LEIA BAEZ
STAFF WRITER

On Dec. 20, more than 800 students, faculty and community members will be grooving to a new beat as the traditional pomp and circumstance is laid to rest.

The first "jazz commencement" in the history of the UNO is set for 2 p.m. at the Omaha Civic Auditorium.

Internationally acclaimed jazz artist Karrin Allyson, a 1987 graduate of UNO, will sing the commencement address. Allyson, who earned her bachelor's degree in music with a major in piano performance, will receive the Citation for Alumnus Achievement. This honor is presented to graduates who have achieved distinction in their vocations.

In August, Allyson released *In Blue*. Her 1999 release, *Paris to Rio*, was voted the top vocal jazz album by *Pulse!* magazine.

"Having (Allyson) sing the commencement address will provide the December graduates with a thoughtful musical experience, in addition to adding to the day's festivities," College of Fine Arts Dean Karen White said. "I predict this will be one of the most unusual and entertaining commencements in the history of UNO."

Allyson will perform "Hello," "Young Lovers" and "(Pack Your) Suitcase Blues." She will be accompanied by the UNO Jazz Ensemble, which will also perform the prelude, processional and recessional.

However, choosing the pieces that would be significant to commencement was challenging.

"People are so used to Pomp and Circumstance that I was a little nervous about playing anything else," Pete Madsen, director of the ensemble, said. "We thought tunes with an American theme at a good walking tempo would be a unique and appropriate substitute."

But it is not only the new jazz theme that will be featured at the commencement ceremony.

Diane Birch, a breast cancer survivor, will deliver the student commencement address titled "Following Through." She will receive her Bachelor of General Studies degree with a major in communication.

Robert Armstrong, president of AVI Consulting, will receive the Order of the Tower, which is UNO's highest non-academic award. It is bestowed upon community leaders whose service and/or financial support has made it possible for the university to address the academic, cultural and economic needs of the people of Omaha and the citizens of Nebraska.

Charles "Denny" Holland, a lifetime advocate for civil rights, will receive an honorary Doctor of Letters degree. In 1947, Holland helped found the De Porres Club while he was an undergraduate student at Creighton University.

Lee G. Simmons, director of Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree. During the past three decades, he has labored to transform a regional zoological park into one of the pre-eminent zoos in the country.

John Hancock, managing partner/shareholder in Hancock & Dana PC, Certified Public Accountants and Technology Consultants, will receive the Citation for Alumnus Achievement. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Nebraska Society of Certified Public Accountants and is a past president of the Nebraska Society of Certified Public Accountants.


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UNO Aviation Institute's online BGS degree program awarded

BETH FLYNN
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The Aviation Institute's Online Bachelor of General Studies Degree Program received the Distinguished Credit Program of the Year Award.

Last month at the annual International Association for Continuing Higher Education meeting, the Aviation program was recognized.

Melba Acheson, Karen Garver and Larry Winkler, representing the College of Continuing Studies, along with Denny Acheson and Scott Vlasek, representing the Aviation Institution, went to the conference held in Birmingham, Ala. While there, they gave a 70-minute presentation about UNO's program.

Out of 17 programs that applied for the award, the panel unanimously selected the Aviation Institute. Judges on the panel included professionals in the field of continuing education from all over the United States.

"[It's a] great honor because it recognized the quality of the program and the teamwork involved with many departments, such as CCS, telecommunication, UNOTV, registrar and more," said Distance Education Coordinator for the Aviation Institute Rebecca Lutte.

The online degree program began in the spring of 1998. It started out with three students and only five enrollments. The past fall semester consisted of 75 students and 114 enrollments. Assistant Dean of the College of Continuing Studies Larry Winkler said this program was the first aviation program offered online in the nation.

The online program is used mostly by students outside

the immediate area of the campus, including civilian or military students from all around the world. The online courses are also offered to local students with certain situations such as those who have an on-call flight schedule.

The online program has come a long way with a lot of advancements and achievements.

Lutte said, "What makes our program stand out? Several things, outstanding advising by the CCS team, competitive costs, the ability to complete a full degree via distance, use of advanced technology."

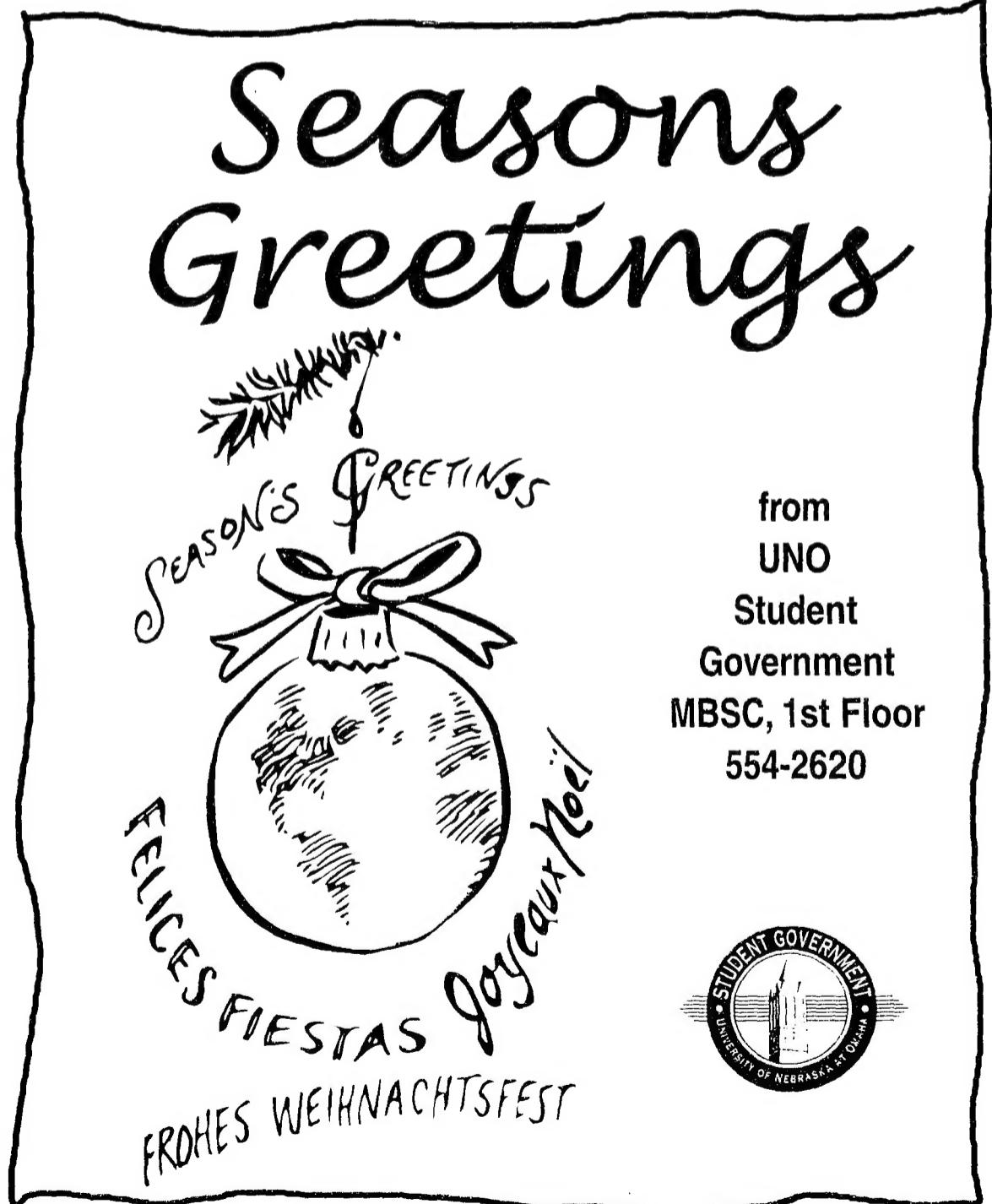
Some of the advanced technology used by the program includes a live two-way audio used on the Internet. This allows students all over the world to connect to the classroom at the same time. They can also view video lectures shot from Houston in a UNO TV classroom and on the Internet.

Through the help of many departments such as UNOTV, the level of participation and interaction between students and their professors has increased.

"Interaction is an important element," Lutte said. "Whether a student is located in western Nebraska or Germany, [they] still need to feel like part of the program."

UNO faculty and other adjuncts, who are usually former faculty from the Aviation Institute, teach the online courses, where students can access all of the classes offered.

"Overall, we have a director with great vision, a faculty with great willingness to take on new challenges, advisers at CCS who are very conscious of student needs and amazing students who are ready and willing to navigate a new course to achieve their educational goals," Lutte said.


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If I can do it, so can you

If UNO used a stress alert system to warn its students of when they are experiencing potentially dangerous levels of stress, like the United States uses a terror alert system to warn Americans of potential terrorist attacks, our campus would be in the red – very high and dangerously close to bursting – because finals week is approaching.

Although many college newspaper columnists across the country will devote their columns to this stressful time, I can't. It's too lame to write a column about what everyone else is sure to be writing about.

Instead, in honor of this finals week being my last ever, I want to spend my last column writing about my college experiences and how I've come to graduate from UNO. I hope you as the reader and future college grad can get something out of it that may help you get out of college, too.

First, let me admit that when I began taking college courses at a San

Diego community college, I had no immediate goals or dreams of an academic future. I, as many freshman do, went to class, took notes then tests and waited for the weekend to party down with my friends. We had some good times but I was killing more brain cells than I was making use of and it was time for a change.

After two years in San Diego, I realized I didn't have much to show for myself. I was a slacking student, out of shape both physically and emotionally and broke financially.

As I reluctantly rebelled against all I had said before I moved to San Diego, I made the decision to swallow the little pride I had left and come back to Omaha. In Omaha I knew I could



Brandon Clogston

accomplish the goal I should have been working for all along – graduate from college.

It was a difficult decision to move back here, but after I enrolled at UNO, it proved to be the right thing to do. Slowly, after my first year, I began to understand what it was going to take to get a degree. It was far off, but I

decided it was achievable.

And now after three and a half years of the repetitive chores and events that come with living in Omaha, plus the two years I spent in San Diego, all the digging through the dirt and taking breaks to rest in the mud has paid off. I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Just as long as no aces

▀ see CAN, page 5

Violence has no place under the Christmas tree

"I had to run the guy over 10 times to kill him," said a 7-year-old boy.

As a daycare provider and mother, I hear kids say plenty of things I wish would never cross their lips, but this had to be one of the more chilling comments I'd heard.

I had asked this little boy, one of my daycare children, what type of Playstation game he had brought to share with my daughter. He excitedly explained that he had brought a game where he was almost to the top level. The object of the game was to kill people for their money.

"Do you like that game?" I asked, hoping to hear that he wished there wasn't so much killing in it. But of course, his reply was, "Yeah, it's pretty cool!"

Being a parent in the age of technology is getting more

and more difficult with each holiday season. We have to be careful not to get toys that are gender biased, too violent or simply a waste of our children's intellect.

The attention of many children has turned to cartoons that are based on guns, fighting and just plain ugliness. Our children are drinking it in and seem to be drawn to it. Perhaps the

Let's talk kids



Jennifer Mullins

▀ see VIOLENCE, page 5



Santa can give you lots of things...
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Letter to the editor

Dear editor:

I would like to respond to an article written by Marion Rhodes in the Dec. 6 *Gateway* called "College costs on the rise."

Why didn't Ms. Rhodes mention to readers WHY tuition was increasing? She mentions many outrageous statistics and methods of coping with the increases, but does not pose the question, "WHY is the rate of increase of tuition twice that of inflation?"

I can see plainly if the rates do not level off soon, a generation of students will be hopelessly in debt and the generation after them will not be able to go to college, not to mention the incredible sacrifice of the parents who, after paying a huge sum of money for their children's education, will probably have a destitute retirement. Can you imagine a country where only the most elite of society are able to afford college? As a student, I would like to see *The Gateway* criticize the administration of this university and investigate why this is occurring.

I don't understand when enrollment and tuition are increasing why a budget crisis exists. What does the university spend its money on? I did some rudimentary calculations: If you multiply the rate of undergraduate tuition (approximately \$102) by the average number of credit hours a student is taking (I estimated nine credit hours) and then multiply that by the entire number of students at the university (approximately 14,000), you get \$12,852,000. Twelve million dollars per semester that does not include revenue generated by Maverick sports events, money from the state of Nebraska, graduate tuition, cost of books or fees we students pay every semester for a quality university and

▀ see LETTER, page 5



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Opinions in columns and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the opinion of *The Gateway* staff or the publications committee.

Letters to the editor will be selected for publication on the

basis of timeliness, clarity and available space. The editor reserves the right to edit all letters for publication.

Letters must be signed using the writer's first and last names. Letters must include the writer's address and phone number for verification purposes only. Letters to the editor exceeding two typed pages will not be considered for publication.



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Front Desk
554-2470
Advertising
554-2494

Editor
554-2352
Fax
554-2735

60th and Dodge streets
MBSC Room 115
Omaha, NE 68182-0197

Christmas magic fades with age

I've always loved Christmas. At the risk of sounding trite, I'd even say it's a magical time.

Come to think of it, I've always loved holidays in general, be it Halloween, Independence Day or Easter. Not only do they serve as landmarks throughout the year — a sort of intangible signpost in which we can measure the year — they also keep us entertained. No matter what the day is, there is at least *something* coming up to look forward to.

But Christmas was always one of my favorites. When I was a kid, I used to anxiously look forward to Christmas weeks in advance. I'd decorate my room with strands of twinkling lights and make sure my stocking was always hung on the mantle, ready to be filled with surprises of which I would daydream about for days.

Manic digression



Josh Bashara

On Christmas Eve, I had the milk and cookies ready to go by bedtime and would even plan surveillance guerilla tactics for Santa Claus, such as hiding a voice recorder near the chimney in the hopes that I could capture a tired grumble or a "Ho, ho, ho" on tape.

However, these days I'm lucky if I even remember Christmas until two days beforehand. I have no idea what box my stocking got buried in and leaving milk and cookies out is just a plain waste of food I could eat the next time I'm broke and hungry.

Christmas just isn't what it used to be. I've noticed — slowly, since I was around 9 or 10 years old — that Christmas seems to be getting less and less special

see MAGIC, page 15

from VIOLENCE, page 4

alternatives do not offer enough sensationalism for them.

As I wander from isle to isle of the toy section in every store looking for the perfect gift for my daughter, the types of toys that are going to be showing up under various Christmas trees plague me.

Children all over this great nation will be gathered in front of video games just like the one this little boy described. They will be discussing ways to better their score, kill more people and get more stolen money. Is this what we want to buy and put under the tree for our children?

As a child I remember being excited to get a boom box for Christmas so I could play the latest Paula Abdul tape. Atari was available at the time, but

the games were limited to Stampede, Frogger and Pac Man. Not exactly non-violent, but the object of the game was far less blatant than the object of the games our children are playing today.

Alternatives do exist and our children will be interested in them if we try. The Discovery Channel is marketing a line of experiments in a box that are affordable. In fact, you could most likely purchase four or five kits for what would cost you to purchase one violent video game.

Leap Frog has created an entire line of interactive learning tools compatible with online programs. The products range from pre-school age to high school. Not the same as killing people for their money, but they are a little fun and children often do not realize they are learning as they play with these

toys.

While you are shopping those store shelves for the perfect gift this holiday season, keep in mind that the toy you are buying is not only something the children will enjoy but also a window into the world. If you are opening a door to violence where it is acceptable and fun to run over a person 10 times so that you can steal a few dollars from him, that is how your child is going to see the world.

I would like to take this time to thank my loyal readers for watching my column biweekly. I have enjoyed writing for you and appreciate the feedback you have sent. Have a happy and safe holiday season. We'll see you again soon.

Jennifer Mullins can be contacted at letstalkkids@gateway.unomaha.edu

from CAN, page 4

are pulled and I don't die in the next week, I will graduate. And that's something at times I thought I'd never do.

So this is it. This is the last time you will read an article of mine in *The Gateway*. This is the last time I have to make the noon deadline to make Editor-in-Chief Kristin Zagurski happy.

But I hope if I've done a good job of writing this article, I've inspired all of you out there who are still truckin' through classes and swallowing up credit hours to keep at it. If I can graduate, then everyone single one of you reading this column can, too. And for those of you who aren't reading my last column ever, you don't deserve to graduate anyway. Just kidding.

See you all later.

Brandon Clogston can be contacted at jambalaya@gateway.unomaha.edu

from LETTER, page 4

education.

But instead of seeking answers and getting to the core of the problem, Ms. Rhodes just talks about ways to alleviate the impact of getting ripped off by the university. Does the administration of the university have limitless power? Can they do whatever they want to without the consent of those who pay their salaries? Shouldn't they be held accountable for their apparent greed and tyrannical policies?

As a student, I can testify to the economic difficulties of higher education. I believe that to a certain extent, the liberal arts education I have received is well worth the debt I have incurred in the last three and a half years, but I don't want to keep struggling for knowledge like a child being forced to jump higher and higher for a bag of candy kept out of his or her reach.

Is there no end to this alarming injustice? Or will our children simply be unable to experience the liberation and enlightenment of a university education because they can't afford it, while the lucky few who can afford a university education are able to hoard most of the wealth away from us?

Dave Steinbeck

Undergraduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences

Campus Security

Would like to wish everyone a safe & happy holiday!

The university will be closed for the Holidays from Dec. 21 - Jan 1. Buildings will be locked, and in order to conserve energy most lights/power will be shut off and heat will be reduced.

Anyone needing access, should contact campus security at: **554-2648**

Happy Holidays.

From the

UNOCCC

University of Nebraska at Omaha Child Care Center

Child Care Center is unit of Student Affairs

A holiday guide for the lazy and unmotivated

MIKE MACHIAN
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

So the holidays are here and you are feeling the overwhelming societal pressure to buy gifts in order to celebrate the holidays, help the economy and fight terrorism. Maybe you think commercialization of the holidays is disgusting. Maybe you don't subscribe to any religion. Maybe you lack the time or maybe you're just broke — whatever the reason, it looks as though your holiday shopping just isn't going to get done this year. This doesn't mean everyone has to go away empty-handed this year. Read on if you have four and half minutes of your time to waste.

Liquor

This one is easy to get. Even if they already have some, chances are they will need more ... soon. What kind of liquor you should get depends on how important the receiver is. If it is someone you owe a big gift, I would suggest something with a very high proof. Encourage the person to drink it all really quickly. When morning rolls around, not only will the person not remember you didn't get them anything good, they won't care.

Buy them a star

Well, not really. There are these places where you can (for a fee) get a star named

after someone, but they can get pricey. Instead, try making them a certificate saying the star is named after them on your computer. Be sure to include some complicated-looking coordinates telling them where to find their star. This may seem a little dishonest, but the only real difference between your forgery and the real thing is you save \$91.

Lottery tickets

They are cheap, easy to find and fit inside an envelope. The recipient could see this as the thoughtless last minute gift it is, but they could also see the glass as half full. This is the gift that has a one in 3 million chance to keep on giving \$273,000 a year for 27 years.

Nada

Of course the best gift I've ever given anyone is nothing. I make an agreement with my friends not to get them anything as long as they promise not to get me anything. That way we can concentrate on those people we know who are not as understanding (like our editors).

Epilogue

If none of these options fit your specific situation, maybe the best gift we can give each other is time and love. We all need to realize nobody needs holiday gifts to be happy.

Except for me — I want a pony.



Stop by our office, 1st floor, MBSC or call 554-2711, we'll show you how to get involved at UNO!!

Check out all the 2003 upcoming events!

Snowman building 101

KATIE SHUKIS
STAFF WRITER

Snowman building is an art form that has evolved over many years. It is also a good way to pass the time and have a lot of fun on a cold winter day when school is canceled. Beware before traveling out into the cold with the intention of creating a snow person masterpiece. It can be very time-consuming and proper warm attire is a must! It is not easy to roll up three large balls of snow and get them to sit on top of each other in a proportional manner without falling over.

Many people may be thinking snowman building is a thing of the past when they still wore pigtails with ribbons in their hair and G.I. Joe underwear. However, according to several UNO students, snowman building is not only for the young but also the young at heart.

Clayton Miller, a freshman, had some tips for finding the proper conditions for the actual building of a snow person: "The best time to build a snowman is when it is just starting to warm up outside. Wet snow

works best because it helps the snow to stick together."

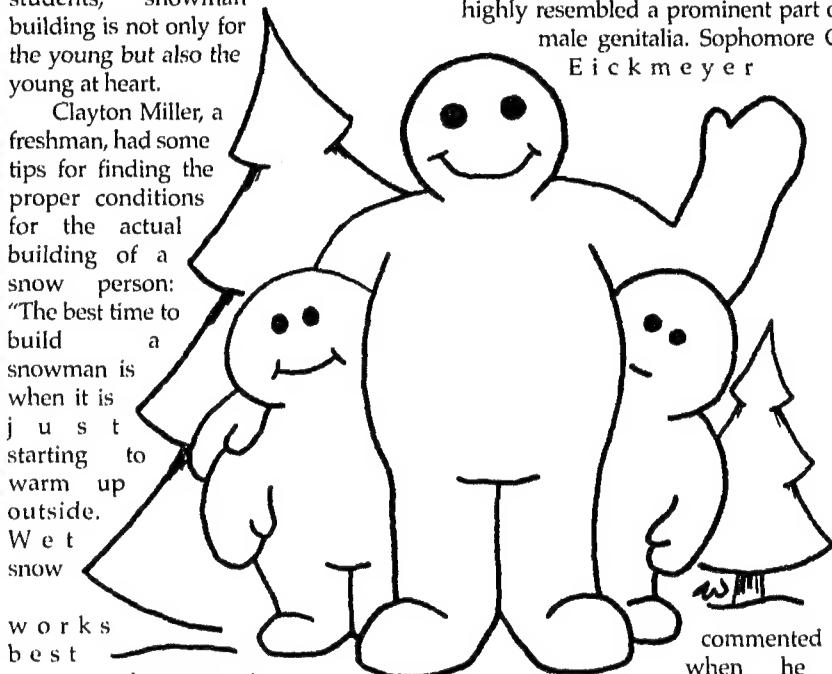
Miller should know considering he not only built snowmen as a youngster but also actually managed to build a real igloo — without it falling down.

Now that proper weather conditions have been established, some other students had good input on the actual construction. Elli Geis, also a freshman, had a lot to say on this subject because she considers herself a very experienced snow person builder.

"You can't build just one snowman, you have to build a whole family of them," she says. "Maybe throw a dog or cat in there also."

Sophomore Ahleeya Tracy agrees with the concept of building snowperson families. She also had some good decoration tips: "I used to use my sister's scarves and gloves to decorate my snowmen." Notice she did not use her own belongings — she might be on to something here.

Although snowman building is meant to be a wholesome and family fun-filled event, several people in the past have taken it upon themselves to turn it into a way to display their more perverse sides. It is rumored that last year on the UNO campus in front of the dorms, there was a very large construction of snow that highly resembled a prominent part of the male genitalia. Sophomore Casey Eickmeyer



commented that when he was younger he and a few others constructed two dogs engaged in amorous activity. Apparently people can make anything out of snow, so be creative.

Based on the opinions of UNO students, the general consensus is that snowman building is for people of all ages. It is apparently also a good way to freely express yourself. So the next time you are sitting inside on a beautiful snowy day, get out there and build a snow person. Even better, build a whole family of them!

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Variety of Christmas trees available this year

KATIE SHUKIS
STAFF WRITER

In many homes, one of the most important pieces for decking the halls is the Christmas tree.

This year, it is easier than ever to put up a tree. There is one out there for everyone, even people who want "no assembly required." No kidding, some just pop out of the box all done up and plug right into the wall.

There are many stores this year that are selling artificial trees of all shapes and sizes but for time's sake, how about just taking a look at the stores most frequented by poor college students - Super Target and Wal-Mart.

Assuming space is a big concern for most people, the focus will mostly be on trees of smaller stature.

Wal-Mart has many options for small trees, but do not forget the old saying, "Big things come in small packages." These trees pack a big bang for their buck. When perusing the Wally World, one will find three different options for trees under 3 feet. The first is a 3-foot revolving fiber optic tree with either ornaments or snowflakes for added decoration. It comes in at only \$32.87.

If ornaments and snowflakes sound a bit too flashy, Wal-Mart also offers a 2.5-



Photo by Danielle Petersen

Fiber optic and pre-lighted trees are among popular tree types this year.

foot plain fiber optic tree without decorations for \$24.87. Both of these fiber optic options come ready to take out of the

■ see TREES, page 14

What does Yule mean, anyway?

JOSH MEINERS
STAFF WRITER

"Troll the ancient Yuletide carol, Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la. See the blazing Yule before us. Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la."

Now that we don our gay apparel, what the heck is "Yule" anyway?

Yule is just another name for the Winter Solstice. The pagan holiday is celebrated on Dec. 21 and is the longest, darkest day of the year.

The origins of Yule are difficult to pinpoint. Some elements of the holiday have Scandinavian or Celtic roots. There are even some discrepancies as to the meaning of the word "Yule." Some believe it means "feast," while others are sure it is another word for "wheel."

The holiday of Yule can be attributed to many of the traditions that are celebrated in conjunction with Christmas. The "Christmas tree" that can be found in many American homes is actually an adaptation of the Yule tree. The tree is symbolic of life existing, even on the darkest day of the year.

Although today's tree is adorned with various ceramic ornaments and candy canes, the tree of yesteryear was decorated with natural things like cinnamon sticks, berries and budding flowers. The string of lights we now place on our trees is a variation of the candles that used to be placed on the Yule tree. Such candles represented the return of sunlight. Similarly symbolic, the Yule log was also burned on Winter Solstice to provide light on the darkest day of the year.

Another parallel Christmas and Yule share are frankincense and myrrh. These are the scents of Winter Solstice and they are also two of the gifts that were given by the wise men to Jesus.

The main purpose of Yule is to celebrate rebirth. It is the belief of the pagans that the God is born again to brighten the lives of all. It is also believed the Goddess is reborn as the Maiden from her prior state as a Crone. Yule is centered not only on bringing back warmth and light but also with surviving the frightening darkness.

Information for this article was taken from www.candlegrove.com/solstice.

Kwanzaa celebration held at UNO

KATIE SHUKIS
STAFF WRITER

The seventh annual Kwanzaa celebration was held Dec. 5 at UNO. The celebration was organized by Luis Muralles of Student Organizations and Leadership Programs and was held in the Milo Bail Student Center Ballroom.

Muralles said there was a "full house" throughout the night, with about 80 people in attendance.

This year's celebration showcased several different presenters. The keynote speaker was Ben Gray of KETV's *Kaleidoscope* program. Other presenters included: Denise Maybank, who spoke on unity and togetherness; Liza Arellano, who did a poetry reading about the principles of Kwanzaa and how they are a part of everyday life; Swehla Hunt, who directed the UNO inspirational choir in song; Charles

Ahovissi, who performed an African dance from western Africa; and members of the National Council of Negro Women, who led a candle-lighting ceremony.

Arellano, who did the poetry reading on Kwanzaa principles, expressed her reasons for wanting to participate in the event. She said: "I was interested in performing because I think the African-American community still needs uplifting, still needs someone to inspire them to love themselves and to become united in a positive way."

Muralles said without the evening's hostess, sophomore Shamika James, the night would not have been nearly as successful. He said she took charge and made sure that the program went smoothly.

"I want to thank everyone for coming," Muralles said. "I feel that is important to do activities together with the university and the community."

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Friday 7:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
December 14, Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Home for the holidays

SARAH MEEDEL
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The semester is nearly over.

Soon there will be no more notes, no more homework, no more jumbo textbooks and no more lectures. Wait a minute; better hold that thought of the no more lectures if you are heading home for winter break.

Many cannot wait to get home but once arrived, they cannot wait to leave. Spending the holidays visiting family can make one joyous and nauseous at the same time. Just the idea of family can conjure up multiple mixed feelings. Anger, loyalty, frustration, trust, affection and embarrassment are just a few of the love/hate emotions one might feel when the word "family" comes to mind.

Some students may only be traveling down the road to visit family; others may be taking a flight to another country. Either way, many students are looking forward to as well as dreading going back home.

Many UNO students are looking forward to having a home-cooked meal while visiting.

"I miss my mom's cooking," says Stacey Lakes. Lakes' culinary art skills do not extend much further than a microwave.

"Ramen is great 'cause it's cheap," Lakes says, "but it gets old real fast."

Lakes is also looking forward to spending time with her two younger brothers.

"We're gonna stay up all night playing Candy Land and eating M&Ms," she says.

One student who is not dreaming of white Christmas this year is Chris Lamberty. Lamberty will be spending his

vacation in southern California.

Lamberty's family decided to take a belated trip to Disneyland.

"I know you are supposed to go to Disneyland when you are like 8 or something," he says. "But better late than never."

He is not worried about getting along with his family on the six-day trip.

"We've always gotten along real well," Lamberty says. "My family is really goofy but we know when to back off."

Not everyone is happy to be going home at semester break.

Shaun Sedlacek is uneasy about going home to a "house full of madness." His mother invited their extended family to visit for Christmas.

"I love my family, don't get me wrong," Sedlacek says, "but I really don't like the idea of having to share a bed with one of my uncles or a cousin."

Sedlacek says he is also dreading his family's ritual singing of Christmas carols on Christmas Eve.

"It's awful. Last year my mom tried to teach our dogs to bark along."

Brian Thomas is another student who is not homesick this year. His mom has not seen him since late October and she might be in for a bit of a surprise when he comes home.

"I always wanted a tattoo," he says. "Two weeks ago I went out and got one."

Thomas currently has a red and orange dragon tattoo wrapped around his left bicep. He plans to try and hide the body art from his mother with long-sleeved shirts but fears what will happen if she discovers it.

"The sh*t will really hit the fan if she finds out," Thomas says.



photo by Josh Williamson

Student Government members Vince Drieling and Christine Didamo sort out the items collected during this year's toiletry drive, which was held Nov. 18 to Dec. 12.

UNO spreads some holiday cheer

SARAH MEEDEL
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Despite budget cuts and the pressure of finals, students at UNO are in a generous mood. Multiple UNO organizations are sponsoring various fundraisers and rallies for donations in order to help make the holidays a little brighter for the less fortunate.

Student Government and the Faculty Senate have teamed up in a toiletry drive this year. The drive started Nov. 18 and ended Dec. 12. Student Body President/Regent Shay Riggs says the drive has been very successful.

"I'm really shocked at the response," Riggs says.

The bookstore donated leftover student survival packs filled with toiletries. Riggs says the mass amounts of deodorant, toothpaste, shampoo and other items do get a little overwhelming.

"You can't walk in here without being overpowered by the scent of Secret," Riggs says.

As of Tuesday, the group had collected 1,700 items. Riggs estimated that by Wednesday the amount had doubled. Final counts were not available at the time of publication. All proceeds are going to the Open Door Mission.

The group plans to award first-, second- and third-place trophies to the organizations and departments that donated the most items.

Toys for Tots is being sponsored at UNO this year by AKD International, Sociology Honors Society and University Village. Donations of new, unwrapped toys costing between \$8 and \$20 will be accepted. Checks or money orders made out to "Toys for Tots" will also be accepted. Drop-off sites include the University

Village office and Rooms 383 and 280 in Arts and Sciences Hall.

The Association of Latino American

Students is running a toy drive at St. Agnes Church and School, 2215 Q St. Donations will be accepted until Dec. 18.

University Affairs is helping out this year by sponsoring a mitten tree. New mittens, gloves, scarves and hats are being requested. University Affairs is located in the Eppley Building, Room 108. Proceeds will be sent to the Salvation Army.

Multiple UNO organizations have chosen to adopt a family this year. A few of the participating groups are Circle K and Catholic Campus Ministries. Each group receives a list of needs and wants for a particular family. The groups then buy presents and food for the families in an attempt to brighten up their holiday season.

The UNO faculty is also lending a helping hand with the "Jeans for Food" campaign. In exchange for a can of food, employees are allowed to wear casual clothes to work. Donation barrels are located in most UNO buildings. Contributions will go to the Omaha Food Bank. The program sponsored by the Staff Advisory Council started Dec. 9 and runs through Dec. 20.

With finals next week and classes being dismissed soon, not everyone has the time to help UNO organizations with their causes. If students would still like to spread a little holiday cheer to the less fortunate, many Omaha-area organizations will still be accepting donations after the semester ends.

The Salvation Army is running various programs. The Angel Tree program will be at Oakview, Westroads and Crossroads malls. The cards on the tree represent an impoverished child's gift wish. Shoppers return the unwrapped gift to the Angel Tree once purchased. The gifts are given to children Dec. 18-23.

The Open Door Mission is always taking food donations. It is located at 2828 N. 23rd St.

*Happy Holidays
from the
Gateway*

Ho- Ho- Holiday movie preview

TJ ACCOLA

STAFF WRITER
WITH SPECIAL GUEST

SANTA CLAUS

Ho ho ho! Merry Christmas, boys and girls! It is I, jolly St. Nick. As you know, I've been making a list and checking it twice - I've found out who's naughty and nice. And you better believe there's both in Hollywood. There's some truly sinister stuff going on in Tinseltown, kiddies (and I'm not just talking about Winona Ryder's extracurricular activities). But there are also some people who will get a visit from yours truly. Want to know what they'll get? Well, TJ (a very naughty lad) and I will tell you.

The naughty
Peter Jackson and the crew of the
Lord of the Rings trilogy

You know what Santa doesn't like? People who do something truly stinky and then think they've done something good. That means you, Peter! I don't care what critics and audiences told you, *Fellowship of the Ring* was a naughty thing to do. Not only was it too long, it was boring. But did you learn your lesson? No. You went ahead and decided to release a second part, *The Two Towers*. And from what I've seen, it doesn't look any better than the first one. For that, I give you a Christmas gift every child dreads: a book. But instead of a tedious three-part tome filled with nonsensical creatures and geekboy fantasy, I give you a book that truly deserves to be made into a movie: Chuck Palahniuk's *Survivor*.

The cast of *Star Trek: Nemesis*

People, you're in the same boat as the cast of *Lord of the Rings*. You've decided to be naughty and release yet another *Star Trek* movie, as if the fourth installment and on weren't bad enough. Even *Star Trek* fans are getting upset. And that only makes it harder for Santa to unload the many *Star Trek* toys I have. To you I give the millions of unwanted Captain Picard figurines the elves and I have stockpiled.

Spike Lee

Spike, you've always been an insolent little fellow. But I've continually forgiven you because you make darn good movies (*Summer of Sam* aside). But from what I've seen and heard about *25th Hour*, you're beginning to stray again. A movie about a recently convicted man (Edward Norton) and his last day before he goes to jail for life? Please Spike, go back to making good movies and documentaries that have some social value. Then I'll think about leaving you some goodies. Until then, you get season courtside tickets for the Indiana Pacers. Enjoy!

Hugh Grant and Sandra Bullock

You kids, what am I going to do with you? The world does not need or want



courtesy photo

Jack Nicholson stars in
Payne's latest, *About Schmidt*.

another romantic comedy with a preposterous plot. *Two Weeks Notice*, in which Hughie continually takes his assistant (that's you, Sandy) for granted, until one day she quits and ... let me guess, realizes he loves her ... is a naughty thing to do. For the both of you, a piece of coal each.

The nice

Julianne Moore

Julianne, you've been a very good little girl. You've always been quite an actress, but this time you've really outdone yourself. Did you know

there's talk of you being nominated for an Oscar for two different performances, in *The Hours* and *Far From Heaven*? Yes, both those movies have received quite some acclaim. For you, I leave an Oscar statuette.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Leo, just like Moore, you've starred in two sure-to-be-good movies, *Gangs of New York* and *Catch Me if You Can*. I just wonder which one audiences will like more. *Catch Me if You Can* probably, because it also stars the very popular Tom Hanks and, unlike *Gangs of New York*, you look clean-shaven and well groomed. Regardless, you have proven over the last few years that you can act quite well. Nice. You get a new supermodel girlfriend to replace Giselle Bündchen.

see MOVIE, page 11

The stuff you gotta watch on semester break

REVIEW BY
JOSH BASHARA

STAFF WRITER

Nothing helps catalyze the Christmas spirit quite like watching some of the best holiday movies ever made. So bust out the Blockbuster card and cut this section out, because it's time to cover the top nine holiday movies ever.

Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) Some may remember this story of time taking its toll on Santa Claus, as he turns to his elfin lackeys for an extra hand. A certain elf (Patch) gets his own ideas and moves to America to start his own toy company, which draws the attention of archenemy B.Z. (played by John Lithgow). One of the first "Science of Santa" movies, *Santa Claus: The Movie* is one of the greats.

Silent Night, Deadly Night (1984) A freakishly whacked tale of a small child who witnesses the murder of his parents by a thief dressed in a Santa outfit. The kid grows up in an orphanage and then, as an adult, snaps when he's required to wear a Santa suit at the store he works at. Everybody dies. Make sure you feed the kids a few Xanax after watching this one, or sugarplums won't be the only things dancing in their heads.

How the Grinch stole Christmas (2000) Directed by Ron Howard and featuring superstar-comedian Jim Carrey, this one's an over-commercial blowout, but still an essential. *Grinch* displays beautiful cinematography on this remake of the

see WATCH, page 10

**Happy
Holidays**

from the **Milo Ball Student Center**

Powerful, controversial and wildly popular

Jesus Christ Superstar gets the local band treatment

ALISSA NICHOLS
STAFF WRITER

When most people look back upon the pantheon of rock records that were more than mere collections of songs, records that were actually revolutions unto themselves, a select few names are mentioned. The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Marvin Gaye's *What's Goin' On* and the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind the Bollocks* come to mind instantly.

But one of rock's most powerful, controversial and wildly popular records wasn't written by four lads from Liverpool, a soul man or a bunch of punks. It was written by a pair of Broadway masterminds

named Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Rice and Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar* had a sudden and lasting impact on '70s culture across the world. Its depiction of Christ's final days inspired thousands of converts and raised the ire of nearly as many who considered it blasphemous and immoral.

This month in Omaha and Lincoln, several local artists are getting together to reignite the music of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Nearly 20 bands from Nebraska's two largest cities will perform all of the songs from the soundtrack in sequence in two separate shows on Dec. 19 and 20.

Jeff Randall, one of the

show's organizers, said the idea for the production came from a concert series that ran in Lincoln a few years ago.

"Bands in Lincoln used to get together once a month to play songs by people like Bob Dylan, Lou Reed or David Bowie," Randall said. "It was something of an informal contest and we had a lot of fun doing it."

"This is the same thing, except it's one album rather than one artist and it's on a somewhat larger scale."

Seventeen bands and solo artists are scheduled to perform at both shows. With that many contributions, the concerts are guaranteed to be somewhat eclectic in nature. Randall said that characteristic was what the

shows' organizers had in mind from the beginning.

"You'll see one band play a country ballad, another band play a punk song and then somebody will get up on stage with an acoustic guitar, but they will all be playing music for the same album."

Some of the participants include Neva Dinova, The Lepers, Race for Titles, The Honey Hush, Crush the Clown and solo artists Matt Whipkey and Greg Cosgrove. Randall will also play with Wolf Tickets, featuring members of the Misfits cover band 138 and tractor punk band The Monroes.

Randall said organizing the efforts of all the musicians has been a rewarding challenge.

"Handing out songs, contacting bands, setting up venues and promoting this had taken a lot of time," he said. "But it also involved a lot of listening to these songs, which are truly great. If you strip away the overproduction and the Broadway glitz, this album stands out among the best ever written."

The tribute concert will be held in Omaha on Thursday, Dec. 19 at Sokol Underground, 13th and Martha streets and in Lincoln on Friday, Dec. 20 at Knickerbocker's, 9th and O streets. Both shows start at 9 p.m. There is a \$5 cover charge for each show. All proceeds will be donated to local charities.

■from WATCH, page 9

original cartoon. Although the Whos who live in Whoville are creepy-looking little suckers, this movie was an instant classic that will be watched by our kids for decades to come.

Miracle on 34th Street (1994) Fashioned after the 1947 original, *Miracle* asks us, "What if Santa really existed?" Richard Attenborough plays the believable part of Santa, a.k.a. Kris Kringle. *Miracle* serves as a generational update for a younger audience. If you're not familiar with the classic story, it's about an older, white-haired gentleman who believes he's Santa Claus. The interesting part is when everyone else starts believing he is, too.

Home Alone (1990) *Home Alone* is one of the most popular Christmas movies of all time. With a winning team—directed by Chris Columbus (*Bicentennial Man*) and written by John Hughes (*The Breakfast Club*)—you can't go wrong. Although seemingly sophomoric nowadays, it's still good for a laugh.

It's a Wonderful Life (1946) Perhaps the most classic Christmas movie of all time (although somewhat overrated), *It's a Wonderful Life* reminds us that there is always something worth living for. Jimmy Stewart plays a down-on-his-luck businessman who is thinking of committing suicide. Will Clarence the angel be able to convince George not to throw it all away? We all know the answer already, but it's still entertaining to watch the story at least one out of the 496 times this movie airs this season.

Scrooged (1988) Richard Donner directs this hilarious take on Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, starring Bill Murray as Frank Cross, a cutthroat network television executive with a discourteous demeanor reminiscent of Ebenezer Scrooge. Cross never liked Christmas, being brought up in a hard-knock family with not so much as an evergreen sprig for a Christmas tree. When Cross is visited by rowdy ghost of Christmas past, the madcap, ditzy ghost of Christmas present and the nightmarish ghost of Christmas future, he knows it's time for things to change.

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989) Perhaps the funniest Christmas movie of all time, it's not the holidays unless you've sat down with some friends and watched Chevy Chase's classic Christmas comedy. *Christmas Vacation* follows the continuing misadventures of Clark Griswold and family, this time home for the holidays. Watching Clark's picturesque Christmas get crushed piece by piece almost makes you feel sorry for the guy, if only the ways in which his plans fail weren't so damned funny. Don't let Dec. 26 come without watching this at least once.

A Christmas Story (1983) Ranking in at a close second to *Wonderful Life* for number of times shown per day on TV, *A Christmas Story* has gone from cult classic to mainstream hit in only a decade and a half. Ralph "Ralphie" Parker wants nothing more than a Red Ryder Carbine Action, 200 Shot, Range Model Air Rifle for Christmas. Only problem is, every adult, even Santa Claus, keeps telling him he'll shoot his eye out. Watching this story of a 1940's-era young boy's yearning for the one true thing that will bring him happiness, all the while dealing with a father who buys a lamp in the shape of a leg with fishnet stockings and a mother who is overly-possessive of her Christmas turkey crafts a beautiful comedy/light-drama that can be enjoyed by all. Both young and old are able to relate to some aspect of this wonderful movie about what Christmas *really* means.



"May the beauty of the season bring you and your family joy, peace and hope for the New Year."

They don't scare me

REVIEW BY
MICHAEL STEGMAIER
STAFF WRITER

If you want to know how not to make a horror movie, *They* is the movie to see. While not as atrocious as some recent Wes Craven produced efforts (i.e. *Dracula 2000*), it is a rushed, formulaic mess of what could have been a fun, popcorn horror film.

The biggest crime *They* commits is the use of the big scares. When walking out of the theater, it seems director Robert Harmon (*The Hitcher*) made an entire movie that revolved around the shadow-drenched creatures.

Admittedly, one could argue that all horror movies are just that, but with this film, there really is nothing else. The plot is weak, the characters are not believable, likable or memorable and the attention to detail is nearly nonexistent. I feel like I saw a test screening for a movie that is still being worked on.

The film is about a troubled young woman, Julia, played by the waifish Laura Regan, (*Unbreakable*) who is experiencing a more intense manifestation of the "night terrors" (a fancy way of saying monsters in the closet) she had as a child. After witnessing the suicide of her childhood friend Billy, she learns from his friends that she isn't the only one who sees things. As the "night terrors" get worse, Laura and those around her question their sanity.

The plot would have been a perfect episode of *Tales from the Crypt* but never quite translates well as a big screen treatment. The *Scream* reject cast is ill equipped to hold the attention of an audience.

To her credit, Regan has a good scream. She does a good job of clawing and scratching her way out of the grip of the nameless creatures. She plays a good victim, but Jamie Lee Curtis — hell, even Neve Campbell — she is not.

The small supporting cast is not much better. The other two "night terror"-ized characters — Sam, played by Ethan Embry (*That Thing You Do, Can't Hardly Wait*) and Terry, played by Dagmara Dominczyk — serve only as fodder for the creatures. They were obviously placed in the script to act as the explanation vessels but they give even less than Billy's ranting for the five minutes he was in the film.

There is never a moment where Julia

and her boyfriend Paul (who we find out is a paramedic only when paramedic skills become necessary) really care about each other, much less like each other. Likewise, Julia shares as much affection and empathy for her troubled "best friend" Billy as she would a crazy talking homeless man. Needless to say, this lack of chemistry makes for a long, drawn-out affair.

While darkness has become a necessity of the horror genre, *They* uses it as a way to cut the cost of digitally animating the monsters. The dark motif works for the creatures as they use shadows as a doorway into our world, but it only allows the special effects team to half-ass their way into making them. They need not worry about design detail, skin texturing or fluid logistical movement because the shadows take care of it all.

Again, it works for the story, but as a huge fan of movie monsters, especially those from Stan Winston Studios, I feel a little cheated. You will spend half the movie squinting your eyes trying to see what it is the filmmakers are showing you.

Of the few highlights is early in the movie when Julia first starts to see "They" where she is driving down a rural stretch of road and she sees some spindly animal skittering across the road. In typical horror movie style, her car stops working (because the creatures "effect electricity," conveniently) and she is compelled to investigate. Even more conveniently, her car begins working just when she is in real danger. Director Harmon is good at creating tension in the classic horror movie sense, but as this is his first horror movie since 1986, he could use a little updating.

They encapsulates all the reasons why horror movies are not taken seriously as a genre. With its clunky dialogue, shoddy effects and an ill-conceived plot, this film couldn't even be an entertainingly typical horror film. It takes entirely too long to make any kind of explanation of what is happening and there is too little explanation to forgive this simple bogeyman kind of film.

In the hands of a more skilled director, Wes Craven perhaps, *They* could have been a creepy ride into the kind of fears we all had as small children. What we get instead is a waste of 89 minutes of our time.

Grade: D

■from MOVIE, page 9



The latest in the Lord of the Rings trilogy, *The Two Towers*, earns filmmaker Peter Jackson a spot on Santa's "naughty" list according to this critic.

Spike Jonze and Charlie Kaufman

You two boys learned well. Having created such a great movie with *Being John Malkovich* a few Christmases ago, you were smart enough to re-team and produce *Adaptation*. It looks like it could be the same strange trip *Being John Malkovich* was, but that's a nice thing. For the two of you, a budget as big as you want the next time you make a movie together.

Alexander Payne

A little overachiever you've always

What's going on around Omaha?

MIKE MACHIAN
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Well, classes are almost over and you are going to have a lot more free time to enjoy the holidays. But let's face it, after a while, all the holiday lights look the same and Christmas music gets really annoying. You need out. Now. Lucky you, I've got a few ideas for just that. Read on. I dare you.

Jammin' at the Joslyn

As always, the cultural center of Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum, is buzzing with activity. This time the buzz will lead you to the museum's atrium on Friday, Jan. 3 for the phenomenal first First Friday Jam of the new year. Andreasen Circle will rock the house with its rock-based blues fused with jazz fusion. Get your buzz started that night at 5:30 and keep it going until 8:30. For more info, your best bet would be to call Joslyn at 342-3300.

Where to go for a holiday kiss concert

No, this is not another reunion by an aging glam-rock band, but rather a holiday-themed production for the whole family. The production is put on by the Stages of Omaha Theatre Company and is being held at the Millennium Theatre, located at 601 S. 16th St. *A Holiday Kiss: A Family Christmas Concert* features familiar holiday songs, stories and more importantly, cookies and cider. The theater has even booked an exclusive engagement with the Santa Claus, who will be on hand to take your children's orders for Christmas. The production's last weekend is on Dec. 14 and 15. To make reservations, call 345-8166 or if you're a phone-phobic like myself, surf on over to www.StagesOfOmaha.com.

Blue Eyes Jr.

Frank Sinatra may be dead, but

apparently his son isn't. What's more interesting is this not-dead Sinatra will be in town Dec. 29 to sing at Harrah's. The most interesting thing of all is the \$50 per person show is from 5:30 to 7 p.m. There is a limited number of tickets available, so on your way out of the casino, deposit some of your winnings at the gift shop for tickets. Failing that, you can always call 1-888-598-8451.

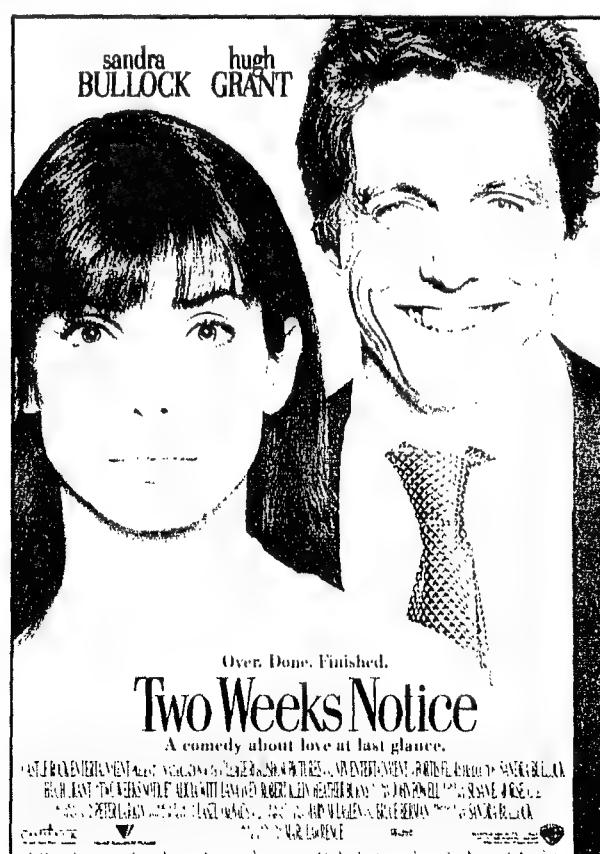
Studio 54

Did that Behind the Music on Studio 54 have you wishing you were born a couple of decades earlier a couple of thousand miles away? Now is your chance to relive Studio 54 in your own backyard! And for charity, no less! On Dec. 28 (which still leaves you free to see Frank Jr.), the Omaha Community Playhouse is having a funky fundraiser in the spirit of Studio 54. You are encouraged to dress in period ('70s) appropriate clothing and dance yourself stupid to disco. You're also encouraged to show up to the playhouse on 6915 Cass St. starting at 9 p.m. You are also strongly encouraged to pay the \$35 for non-member and \$28 for playhouse members ticket price to get in. To get this encouragement or for more info, call 231-8534.



& THE
GATEWAY

INVITE YOU AND A GUEST TO A
SPECIAL ADVANCED SCREENING!



Stop by THE GATEWAY on campus
and pick up a complimentary pass to attend a special advanced screening of

Two Weeks Notice

at the Douglas 20 Grand, December 17th, 7:30 pm.

This film is rated 'PG-13' for some sexual related humor.

Passes are available while supplies last on a first come, first served basis. One pass per person. No purchase necessary. Employees of all promotional partners and their agencies are not eligible.

IN THEATERS FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

Men's team goes 2-0 in Greg Rahe Classic

PAUL FREELAND
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Size does matter, apparently.

UNO's height came into play both positively and negatively as the Mavericks won both of their games in the Greg Rahe "Voice of the Hornets" Classic, hosted by Emporia State University. The No. 24 Mavs rallied to beat St. Mary's (Tex.) 77-69 in their first game. They defeated Mesa State 100-81 in game two to move to 5-0 on the season.

St. Mary's opened their game against UNO with a smaller, quicker lineup that gave the Mavs problems. The Rattlers hit 17 of their 27 first-half shots (63 percent) and ended the half on a 10-0 run to take a 41-32 lead going into halftime.

Maverick Head Coach Kevin McKenna switched in a smaller group of players, though, and UNO's defense responded in the second half. The Mavs limited St. Mary's to 36 percent shooting in the second half. UNO outscored the Rattlers 45-28 in the second stanza to run out winners at 77-69.

Adam Wetzel led the Mavericks with a game-high 21 points. He also had five rebounds. Dan Morrow had 13 points, four rebounds and three assists and C.J. Martin had 10 points and six rebounds.

Mesa State came into its matchup with UNO having beaten host school

Emporia State 72-68 and averaging 93 points per game. MSU started quickly and built an early 10-2 lead, but the Mavs regrouped and went on a 10-0 run of their own to move into the lead for good. UNO built leads as high as 14 points before taking a 47-35 advantage into intermission.

UNO continued to build on its lead in the second half as the Mavericks hit 19 of 29 shots (65.5 percent) en route to 53 second-half points. All 11 Maverick players saw at least 10 minutes of action, scored at least four points and had at least one rebound as the Mavs broke the 100-point barrier for the first time this season.

Martin and Seth Nelson each had 18 points to lead UNO while Wetzel had 11 points, five rebounds and five blocked shots. Ryan Curtis added 12 points and a game-high seven rebounds for the Mavericks, who improved to 5-0 with the win. As a team, the Mavs outrebounded Mesa State 36-19, including 12 offensive rebounds. The Mavs held MSU to 8 of 25 three-point shooting.

UNO will return to Omaha tomorrow to host Wayne State at the Sapp Fieldhouse, a game that will be the start of a six-game home stand, which will stretch into the start of North Central Conference play. Tip-off for Saturday's game is slated for 7 p.m.

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Ellingson making best of it

MELISSA KUCIREK
STAFF WRITER

Why running? Why not read a book? Why run mile after mile, day after day, year after year?

Senior cross country and track standout Michelle Ellingson runs because "she'd miss it too much."

With the cross country team's season already passed, Ellingson is gearing up for her final track season. It's back to business as usual for Ellingson, but this season she wants to make an even bigger impression.

And to think, she nearly went to school across town with plans to not run.

"The only reason I came to UNO was because of cross country and track," Ellingson said. "I had actually been ready to go at Creighton and got the call from Coach Hendricks. I decided around July to go to UNO."

Ellingson's contributions to the Maverick squad have not gone unnoticed. In her final season, her 39th place finish helped lead UNO to 16th overall at the 2002 NCAA Division II Nationals in Ashland, Ohio. During her junior year, her 5,000-meter time of 17:34 not only put her in the North Central Conference Championships — she set a school record.

"It finally paid off last year," said Tim Hendricks, UNO cross country and track coach. "She made a real breakthrough. She was the team leader in cross country and at the national championships."

Ellingson's running path started at Omaha Gross High School in homeroom, of all places. Her freshman year, she remembered hearing repeatedly that members were needed to fill the Cougar squad. She went out for the team and has stuck with the same formula.

"I start from the back," she said. "I don't feel that I have the speed that some girls have. I like to run as even as I can."

She said while she runs her mind



Senior cross country and track team member Michelle Ellingson hopes to attend medical school after graduation and become a pediatrician. "Your motivation has to come from inside you," she said. "Runners have high standards for themselves."

photo by Chris Machian

constantly wonders through songs in her head, but she mostly thinks about the other runners surrounding her. While cross country is her favorite, she is looking to trim her indoor track time by 10 or 15 seconds.

She also concentrates on making the most of her final season.

"If you've invested so much time into something, you want to make it worthwhile," Ellingson said. "I'm trying to work on getting better every time."

When she isn't running, Ellingson enjoys spending time at movies with her teammates and reading mystery novels.

After graduation, the biology and chemistry major hopes to attend medical school. She hopes to become a pediatrician.

"Your motivation has to come with inside of you," Ellingson said. "Runners have high standards for themselves."

Klitschko brothers hope to rule the boxing world together

BEN COFFMAN
STAFF WRITER

The latter half of the '90s boxing world seemed to give way to a dominating new breed of modern pugilist — the super-heavyweight. Fighters like Lennox Lewis, Wladimir Klitschko, Vitali Klitschko, Jameel McCline and Lance "Goof" Whitaker tower over today and yesteryear's competition.

On Saturday, Dec. 7, Olympic gold medallist Wladimir Klitschko met former Lewis sparring partner McCline in a modern-day clash of the titans.

The undercard made this one of the best fight cards of the year with a rematch of Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Jose Luis Castillo. Mayweather won April's bout with Castillo in a controversial decision.

Mayweather brought great footwork, hand speed and slipperiness to the table. Castillo, a former sparring partner of Julio Cesar Chavez, brought a bone-crunching left hook to the body and a willingness to mix it up.

The fight started off cautiously, with Castillo eventually pressing the fight — a role he would assume for the rest of the bout.

Mayweather stuck to his game plan of staying in the middle of the ring where he could do his best work of sticking and moving. Castillo spent a good deal of time in the fight just holding on to Mayweather with one arm while punching to the body with the other —

it was ugly but effective in stopping Mayweather's movement.

The end result of the fight wasn't pretty, but Mayweather got the job done. Mayweather won in a close but unanimous decision and will now look to his next opponent after having twice defeated Castillo this year.

Even from the ring entrance, a 260-pound, 6 and a half-foot tall McCline looked as if something was bothering him. Maybe it was the fact that he was about to get in the ring with a fighter with a record of 39-1-0, with 36 knockouts, the supposed heir apparent of boxing's new dynasty.

McCline was taking a huge step up in class in this fight and he seemed to know it. He lacked the confidence he'd exhibited in earlier fights against Shannon Briggs and Goof Whitaker.

Klitschko, on the other hand, weighed in at a trim 240 pounds with an equal height of 6 and a half feet and looked like he should be chanting "Fee Fi Fo Fum, I smell the blood of an American." Aside from being an extremely athletic giant (he has a doctorate in sports science from the University of Kiev, Ukraine), Klitschko is a boxing technician. The snap from his left jab and left hook are unlike anything seen in the heavyweight world.

McCline failed to establish the range of his

see RULE, page 15

Women's basketball team splits games at CMSU tourney

PAUL FREELAND
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

UNO dropped a rousing triple overtime game to hosts Central Missouri State, but the Mavericks still managed a split in the Holiday Inn Express Jennies tournament.

Raina Tasa came off the bench to lead UNO with 19 points in the Mavs' 90-56 rout of Minnesota-Morris, but the host Jennies outlasted UNO as CMSU won 96-93 in three overtimes.

Minnesota-Morris entered the game sporting a Division II record 70-game losing streak. The Mavericks quickly set about extending their misery. UNO pulled down 58 rebounds, 30 of which came on the offensive end. The Mavs took 98 shots to Minnesota-Morris' and pulled away in the second half to win 90-56.

Tasa led the Mavericks with 19 points. Sara Peterson had 15 points, nine rebounds and four steals and Lindsey Petersen had 13 points and seven rebounds. Chelsie Grosley added nine points, six rebounds, five assists and four steals for the Mavs.

CMSU pulled ahead early in the tournament's championship game, taking a 40-29 lead into halftime. The Mavericks' shooting came around in the second half, though, as UNO shot 63 percent, including four of five three-pointers, from the field. The Mavs outscored the Jennies 42-31 to force overtime.

UNO and CMSU failed to break the deadlock between them in the first two overtimes, but Bethany Orendorff converted a layup with 3:11 left in the third overtime to put the home team ahead to stay.

Tanya Hammes led all scorers with 34 points on 13 of 25 shooting and also had 13 rebounds and six assists for UNO (4-3). Peterson had 20 points, four rebounds and four steals and Tasa had 12 points and nine rebounds. Isha Kelley led CMSU (5-3) with 22 points and six assists. Orendorff had 14 points and 17 rebounds.

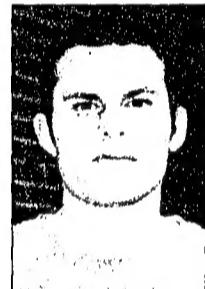
UNO hosts Doane College tonight at the Sapp Fieldhouse with tip-off scheduled for 7 p.m. The Mavericks will also host Peru State Sunday at 3 p.m.

Playoffs! Are you kidding me?

As an avid college football fan over the last 15 years, I've fallen in love with the game.

I've witnessed the rise, fall and return to glory of Miami Hurricane football. I saw Tom Osborne prove all the experts wrong, as he did it his way en route to back-

The Raf report



Raf Czarnecki

to-back-to-back (they really beat FSU in '93) championships over the mighty Florida squads. I watched Michigan legends Desmond Howard and Charles Woodson pose for the Heisman Trophy in the process of rolling over Ohio State. I couldn't believe my eyes when Michael Westbrook hauled in Kordell Stewart's pass at the "Miracle in Ann Arbor." I sat in awe viewing remarkable athletes named Ismail, Faulk, McNair, Moss

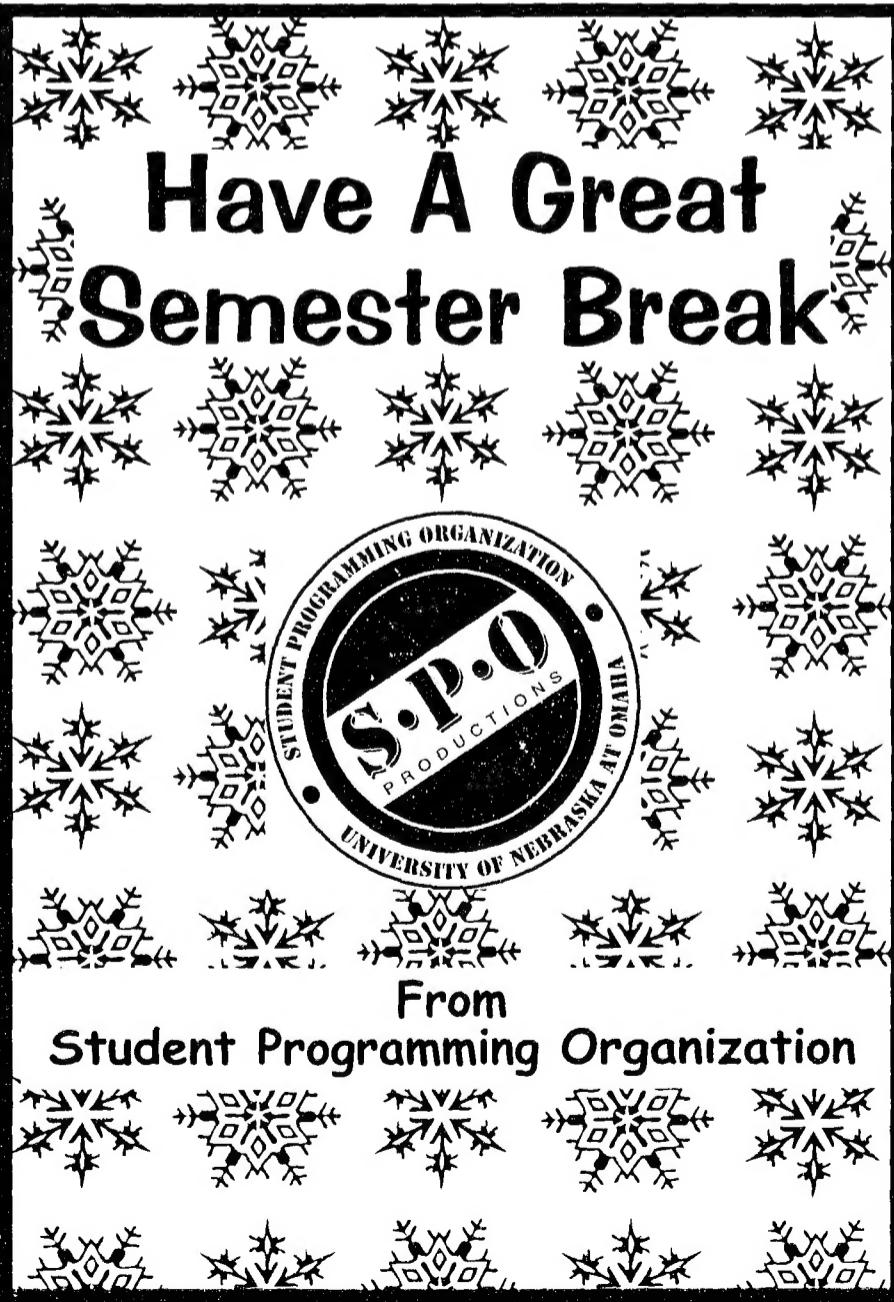
see RAF, page 14

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Many Mav hockey players take trips home for the holidays

BRIAN BRASHAW
SPORTS WRITER

From Quebec City to Alaska, Buffalo to Las Vegas, Minot to Moorhead, the Maverick hockey team is clearly the farthest-reaching of the athletic teams.

Only one Maverick, Jeremiah Johnson, is from Omaha.

And although they don't like to admit it through all the tough-guy imagery, these guys do actually get homesick.

So after their final weekend series of the year against Ohio State this weekend and after they suffer through their finals next week, most of them are making the trip home for the holidays.

"Being away from your family for three or four months is tough, so it will be nice to go back and see them," said winger Dan Hacker.

Hacker is in his sophomore season with the Mavericks and has recently picked up his play. He has had three goals and six assists for the Mavericks this season.

But Hacker won't be going to his actual home in Wasilla, Alaska.

"I'm going back to where my folks are working at, in California," Hacker said. He also said he might be meeting up with teammate Micah Sanford in Las Vegas.

"Vegas is pretty close to where they are at, so I might meet up with Sanford and try to get on the ice a couple times."

After being on the road for two weekends in a row and playing four consecutive series with finals to follow, the team is looking forward to the break.

Defenseman Mike Gabinet said, "Right now, there are guys in tough majors with finals coming up and with the team being on the road the last two weekends, you're up studying until one in the morning and you're

getting up and doing the exact same thing every day. We're all ready for the break."

The break will be nice for UNO, who has played in holiday tournaments in the past. In 1999, the Mavericks played in the Badger showdown hosted by Wisconsin. There, UNO picked up their first hardware-placing third.

There will be no holiday tournament this season for UNO.

"Some of the tournaments would be beneficial to play in because there are a couple big-name tournaments," Gabinet said. "But as far as playing just to play, it's nice to get the break."

Gabinet will mix a little ski in with his skate while in Canada on the break.

"I'm going skiing for a couple days up in the mountains," he said. "And there's about 20 outdoor rinks where I'm at and there will be a lot of my other buddies that play college league back home too, so we'll be on the ice."

With the surge that the hockey team has had, going undefeated in their last five games, will a two-week hiatus break the momentum, or give them a chance to heal from the four-week pounding?

"For our team I wish we could keep going with the pace we are on right now," Hacker said. "But it will give us a chance to heal all the bruises."

Gabinet is confident the time off won't be a problem.

"When you got a good thing going, you want to keep things they way they are working. But on the same note you have to come back with the same mentality."

The team will take about nine days and enjoy the holiday. They better rest up well – the Fighting Irish will be waiting when they return to action Jan. 3 and 4 at the Civic.

HPER Building Winter Break Hours



Sat., Dec. 21 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*
Sun., Dec. 22 - Noon-6 p.m.*
Mon.-Wed. Dec. 23-25 - CLOSED*
Thu.-Fri., Dec. 26-27 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 28 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*
Sun., Dec. 29 - Noon-4 p.m.*
Mon.-Tue., Dec. 30-31 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.



Wed., Jan. 1 - CLOSED*
Thu.-Fri., Jan. 2-3 - 6:30 a.m.-8 p.m.
Sat., Jan. 4 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*
Sun., Jan. 5 - Noon-6 p.m.*
Mon.-Fri., Jan. 6-10 - 6:30-8 p.m.
Sat., Jan. 11 - 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.*
Sun., Jan. 12 - Noon-6 p.m.*

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Minton won't miss NU vs. Mississippi

On Dec. 27, Nebraska will play Mississippi in the Independence Bowl and you better believe she will be watching.

She'll have front row seats, yet we won't see her. She'll be cheering louder than anyone ever could, yet we won't hear her. And she'll have the biggest, brightest smile anyone has ever seen, no matter what the outcome. Only no one will see it.

Shirley Minton was a native of Mississippi, but became the biggest Husker fan with a southern drawl this side of the Mason-Dixon. She lived everything Nebraska. One year, Minton was even featured in *USA Today* for her fanatical following. She had promised to wear red every day for one year if the Huskers won the championship in 1994. She followed through, wearing red everyday until Nebraska won it again in 1995.

She would be in heaven to see her beloved Nebraska play her native Ole Miss Dec. 27 – that is, if she wasn't already there.

Four years ago this March, Shirley Minton died in a fatal car accident less than a week before her 50th birthday.

To all of us who knew her, she was so much more than a Husker fan. She was "Mama Minton," our beloved journalism teacher at Papillion-La Vista High School.

Minton demanded a high amount of excellence from us and did everything she could to encourage us to hold ourselves to that standard. Under her guidance, the Papillion-La Vista *Scepter* was one of the most respected high school publications in the state and won several awards. Year after year, she continued to turn students into writers and writers into successes.

She was always a favorite among students and her laughter was contagious. It was difficult to stay in a bad mood around her.

She was so enthusiastic about everything, loved to see us happy and loved to cook for us. We knew well of her dirt cake and famous meatballs and she often threw staff parties for us to enjoy her specialties. Few things made her more happy than watching us enjoy food she had prepared.

The same applied for us, who enjoyed preparing a publication she could be proud of and we could take pride in producing.

Live wire

Brian Brashaw

Her work with the students was unsurpassed. She would often spend hours on end with us talking about our lives, listening to our problems and guiding us on our paths. To this day, the light she provided for us still shines. The opportunities she gave us, the ability and potential she recognized and the work ethic she instilled in us still resonates to this day.

There are currently seven members of *The Gateway* staff who learned under Minton, including Editor-in-Chief Kristin Zagurski, Copy Editor Rae Licari and myself. Several other of Minton's prodigies have come and gone as well, including former Editor-in-Chief Erin Joy.

Few educators are missed as much as Mama Minton. She was so popular there were even lobbying efforts to name the Papillion-La Vista school district's new high school in her honor.

It is obvious the impact she had on us and her enthusiasm for the art of journalism has spread to us. Not one article goes by that I write that I don't think of how she encouraged me. And every time I think that I can't go on, that I can't do this anymore, I think of how she tirelessly worked for us.

However, it ultimately might have been her tireless efforts that resulted in us losing her. It is suspected she fell asleep at the wheel that awful afternoon while returning from Lincoln.

Upon her death, thousands packed the gymnasium to gather and remembered her. A former student, Chris Williams, talked about how much she truly loved her students and that every year she cried when each class left. He told of how she truly loved to cook and that her face lit up just watching us being brought together by her cooking. And he told of how much she loved the Huskers, saying that she was "up in heaven with Bob Devaney."

So now we remember her and cry and smile. But on Dec. 27, we will know that Mama Minton is in heaven watching Nebraska play Mississippi, laughing and cheering and lighting up the heavens with her smile and we in turn will all smile. And we will know that not only is she watching the game, she is watching us as well. And we will make her proud.

from RAF, page 13

and Vick elevate the game to a whole new level year in and year out.

Hundreds of amazing games, shocking upsets and at times agonizing college football Saturdays later, I'm writing my final Raf Report as a *Gateway* columnist. I feel it's only fitting that I leave with the unveiling of my college football playoff system that should lead to a clear-cut national champion and more exciting memories to an already marvelous sport.

Raf's takeover of the BCS

After hours of deliberating between whether eight or four teams would be better suited for my playoff formula, I found myself awake at 3 a.m. (what else is new) and in need of assistance. That's when I grabbed a cup of Ramen noodles, chugged down a cold can of Sprite (no alcohol on school nights will take you far, folks) and called Dan Jackson, a reliable college football colleague of mine, for professional advice.

Now mind you Jackson, or D.J., for those of you who know the kid, has maybe a third of the sports knowledge I possess, but he does make a valid point on occasion. He also wins more money on college football than all my other friends, so I figured what the hey?

After 15 minutes of discussing why Ohio State quarterback Craig Krenzel can't beat Miami in the Fiesta Bowl, D.J. advised me to stick with the four-team theory, get rid of the Sugar Bowl in the BCS picture and remember to bet the house on Penn State. I reminded him that gambling is not tolerable (I like Colorado for the record) and I didn't condone his actions.

After all was said and done, the new system, which should begin by 2006 if my peeps on the East Coast take care of business, would consist of a simple three-step program following these guidelines:

1- Tweak the BCS so strength of schedule and quality wins over Top 20 teams mean more than what media hacks and computer geeks think.

from TREES, page 7

box and plug in.

If these two trees still are not convincing enough to make you go out and get in the Christmas spirit, here is one that will – a 3-foot Waterville pine for \$9.94. Do not kid yourself though, there is a reason it is so cheap. It looks like it could possibly have an eating disorder of some kind, considering its sparsely spaced branches, but for a poor college student, it may be just enough to get you through.

Wal-Mart also offers several full-size trees, most of them pre-lit. Pre-lit trees seem to be pretty popular this year.

If one is in the market for a full-size pre-lit tree, Wal-Mart has the most economical of all deals. The 7.5-foot pre-lit Oregon fir tree with 500 mini lights in clear or multicolored costs only \$84.86. The most obscure of all the trees the retailers are offering this year is the pre-lit wire tree at a price of \$49.85. Picture Christmas lights on a green stick, which is about all the description needed for that one. It is not recommended!

Although Wal-Mart seemed to have the most selection for the biggest value, Super Target also has a lot to offer, especially if you're looking for something a bit more presentable.

Just as Wal-Mart did, Super Target has several small fiber optic trees. Four different versions of a 32" tree are available, including one in all silver, one that has a poinsettia theme and two multicolored, with or without ornaments.

2- After the conference championships have been played, take the top four teams in the final BCS rankings and send them off to playoff land. Four teams rather than eight so that winning regular season games still means something for all you traditionalists and drama seekers.

3- Two semi-final games played on Jan. 1 pinning No. 1 vs. No. 4 and No. 2 vs. No. 3. The two semi-final winners meet Jan. 7 in the national championship game. Rotating the Rose, Fiesta and Orange Bowls every year as sites for the three playoff games and sending the Sugar Bowl off to host one of the other 300 "prestigious" Bowl Games before or on New Year's Day.

All in all, the Bowl games would remain in tact, corporate sponsors and schools would still make millions of dollars, a true "on the field" champion would emerge and I'd walk away the genius, happy to have improved the greatest show on earth.

Farewell address

Congrats to the seniors (Angela McKay – the sky is the limit young lady) who survived those treacherous seven years and will be graduating next week. Let me know where the party's at.

Thanks again to all my editors and fellow writers. Paul Freeland – U.S. soccer will rule the world in 2014 and I hope you're there to report it as it happens. Kristin Zagurski – You've been blessed with the Polish name and a talent to write, I see greatness in your future. And finally, a good friend of mine who last year gave me the opportunity to share my thoughts with the rest of this fine university, Sports Editor Brian Brashaw. B-Shaw, your columns are solid and your hockey knowledge is unprecedented. You've got what it takes to make a career out of it and I wish you the best of luck in your journey.

College athletics rule supreme, *The Gateway* is big time and last but not least – everyone say it with me – "late."

These range from \$19.99-\$29.99.

For a halfway decent-looking tree that doesn't cost a lot of green, Target's 4.5-foot lighted Palmer Pine with either clear or multicolored mini lights comes highly recommended at \$39.99.

Target also has a wide selection of large pre-lit trees, but they are on the more expensive end of the spectrum.

Since most of the trees showcased in this article have been selected because of their smaller size and economic value, it would just be wrong to leave out the two best space savers on the market today.

These trees cannot be found at Super Target or even at Wal-Mart. Anyone interested in half of a tree or a corner tree will have to log on to Nelson's Christmas Shop at www.nelsons-christmas.com. This site offers a wide variety of trees including the half of a tree, which is perfect for smaller areas. This tree is meant to be pushed up against a wall to make it look as if there is really a full tree there. This tree costs \$89, but it must be worth it because Nelson is already sold out of these for the present time.

Nelson also offers a corner tree that is cut at a right angle, allowing it to slide into a corner and take up as little space as possible. This one will only run you about \$75, but it, too, is sold out for the time being.

There many different kinds of Christmas trees out there this year; the trick is to find the one that fits you best. In the spirit of Christmas, get out there and pick up a tree, before they are all sold out!

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from RULE, page 12

jab early on and Klitschko dished out hard shots at will. Klitschko also seemed overly cautious at first but by the end of the first round he'd landed some trademark left hooks and seemed to be getting more confident.

Klitschko continued to gently press the fight, not really putting punches together until the ends of rounds. Still, it was obvious his power terrified McCline. McCline's punch numbers stayed in the single digits throughout the fight — it appeared as if he was just content to survive against the masterful Klitschko.

In round 10, a six-punch combo by Klitschko rocked McCline. A series of left hooks finished the job and sent his 260 pounds to the canvas. Despite the fact that McCline regained his feet as the round ended, McCline's corner threw in the towel. It was just too much too soon in McCline's short pro career.

There is word Vitali Klitschko will get a shot at Lewis in the spring. Another Tyson-Lewis fight may

come after that, if Mike Tyson can get back in the ring and fool the majority of the boxing fans into believing he is more than just a shell of the fighter he once was.

Wladimir definitely seems to be the more dangerous of the two Klitschkos, but what happens if older brother Vitali wins the title from Lewis? Both Klitschkos have already said they won't fight each other — they'd prefer to rule the boxing world as brothers.

Wladimir has been criticized in the past for taking too many jabs. Lewis loves to throw jabs. Both men have power. Klitschko seems to have the edge in speed. Lewis has been knocked out twice — Klitschko's chin is as yet untested. Both men have won Olympic gold. Both men have had long and illustrious amateur careers. At 26, Klitschko has youth. In his mid-30s, Lewis has experience.

There is an old boxing cliché that "styles make fights" — that seems very appropriate here. Boxing fans can only pray this fight gets made.

foreign exchange students helps with the improvement of America.

"To reach out and have an understanding of cultures and traditions," he said.

Jiechi said the United States is one of the most well-developed countries and he hopes the United States and China can work closer together.

He believes that more exchange programs would create a better opportunity for students to exchange views with Americans on trade and world affairs.

Jiechi told the group Nebraska is known for being the Cornhusker State. He also told the group that the word "corn" in Chinese means "precious rice."

"Nebraska is a hidden gem in the middle of America," Jiechi said. "We should tap into that resource."

Jiechi told the students in the audience they "should take

advantage of this blessed world because it is surrounded with many opportunities."

When Mi Yang heard the Chinese ambassador was going to make a visit, she said she was really excited.

"Omaha is such a small city," she said. "We really don't have many programs like this for us students."

Yang, a junior, has been living in the United States for five years. She said there has been a lot of change in China. Yang said she feels disconnected with her homeland because the university doesn't offer as many foreign programs.

Ambassador Jiechi encouraged students to make friends with at least one foreign exchange student.

"We should come to know each other better," he said. "I would like to take our relationship to a new height."

sit us down and tell us that Santa is really mommy and daddy.

Thus, the magic of Christmas begins to fade.

Christmas Day loses that air of wonder that sets it apart from the other 364 days of the year. Time speeds up and fun slows down. The holidays are reduced to just a free day off work or school.

This makes me wonder if maybe Christmas and the rest of the holidays are supposed to be as special at this point in our lives. Everything else in life is tough and hectic and stressed in this phase of our lives, so why should the holidays be exempt?

Perhaps we've just let the natural order of things run their course. We had our time and if we didn't use it wisely, that's our loss. We have to bow out and let the next generation of kids take our place.

The only light at the end of this sad and cynical tunnel is the hope that someday the magic returns. Someday, when we have a family of our own, the wonder of Christmas is awakened once again as we live the excitement and bright-eyed joy vicariously through our children.

So this year, maybe I'll dig out that old stocking from the box it's hiding in. I'll hang it on the mantle — in all its ratty and faded glory — and try to catch a glimpse of the future. Or remember the past. Maybe that's the magic of Christmas after all.

Josh Bashara can be contacted at mangcdigression@gateway.unomaha.edu

from VISIT, page 2

1975 to 1983.

International Studies and Programs Dean Tom Gouttiere said he is pleased to have such a good foreign student enrollment.

Gouttiere said when he came to the university in 1974, out of the 13,000 students enrolled at the university, only 24 students were from abroad. Now, there are more than 15,000 students attending the university, 1,122 of which are foreign exchange students representing 98 countries.

"You all create a resource that is indispensable," he said to the many exchange students sitting in the audience.

"You help us educate our community and UNO," Gouttiere said. "We truly believe that your presence here helps enrich our university."

Hagel said the presence of

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Happy Holidays!!
Next issue of the Gateway
January 14, 2003



The UNO NCAA Division II runner-up soccer team poses for a photo on the beach in Virginia. Front row (from left to right): Jaime Venhaus, Ashley Grace, Stephanie Kruse, Molly Herzberg, Rachel Tushner, Brytten Kraft, Julie Moeller, Heather Frost. Middle row: Lisa Ayers, Meghan Pile, Amy Price, Amanda Hake, Tiffany Mac, Katie Conlon, Jessica Dotson, Stephanie Kirby, Akeisha Varnado. Back row: Heidi Bargmann, Jamie Cramer, Anne Willrett, Becca Fritz, Jane Splittergerber, Christen Boeckel.

Soccer team has record-setting season

PAUL FREELAND
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

A wide variety of numbers could be offered up to illustrate the success of the UNO soccer team in 2002, but the most telling could be 21 – the number of players returning to the NCAA Division II runner-up team next season.

UNO reached the tournament final in the program's fourth year of existence and, in the process, broke numerous records.

Senior Stephanie Kruse's three goals in the tournament semifinal and final garnered her a place in the UNO record books. Kruse's performance gave her 24 goals on the season and 45 career goals, both records. She also set a new career points record at 112. In addition, junior Stephanie Kirby's assist on Kruse's first semifinal goal tied her with Katie Hobbs for the career assist record with 26.

Winona State scored against the Mavericks in the season's first match, but opponent tallies would not become a common sight. The Mavs went 780:47 minutes without allowing another goal, shutting out No. 6 Truman State 3-0 in Kirksville, Mo., and Division I in-town rival Creighton 2-0 and accumulating seven shutouts in the process. The scoreless streak was broken by North

Dakota in a 6-2 Maverick win, but UNO responded with a 5-1 win at No. 10 Northern Colorado and six more shutouts followed.

UNO opened postseason play as it hosted the North Central Conference tournament for the second time. The Mavericks, tournament champions in 2000 and 2001, beat North Dakota 3-0 and No. 24 Minnesota State-Mankato 5-2 to win its third consecutive tournament crown and clinch the top seed in the Midwest region.

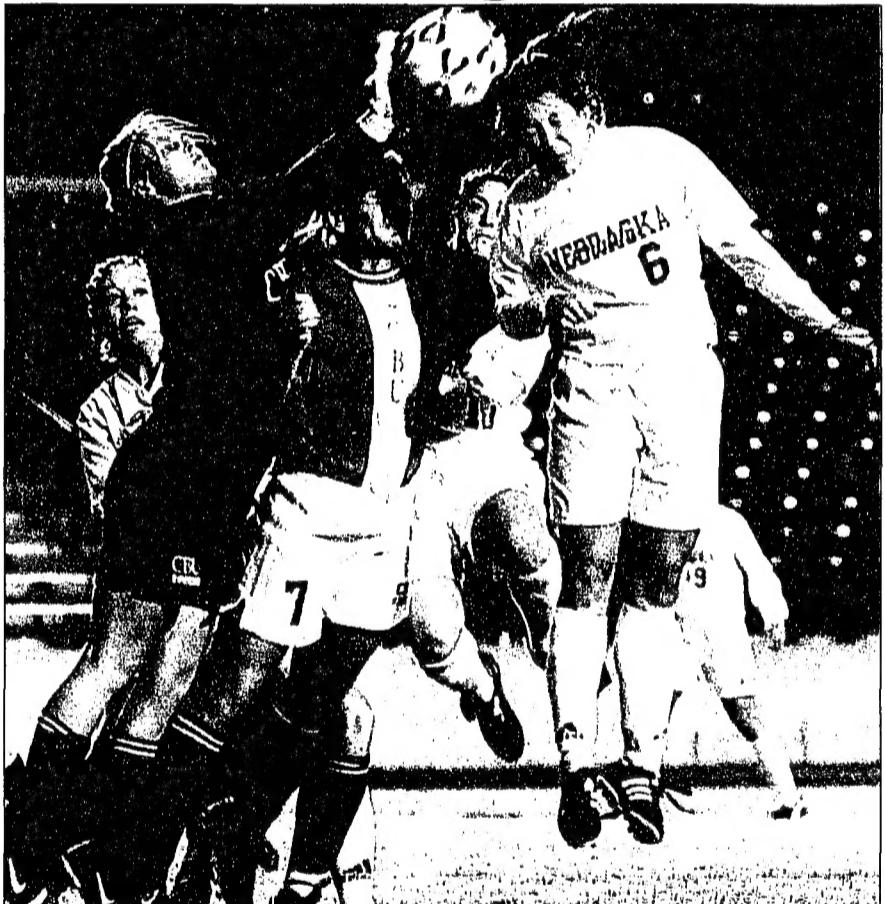
Twenty-third-ranked Truman State defeated Northern Colorado 1-0 to advance to the second round of the NCAA tournament, but its rematch with UNO resulted in another 3-0 win for the Mavericks. The Mavs then traveled to No. 1 Northern Kentucky and, thanks to Jessica Dotson's second-half goal, upset the top-seeded Norse to become the first NCC team to advance to the national semifinals.

Five-time national champion and fourth-ranked Franklin Pierce squared off with the Mavericks in the first semifinal in Virginia Beach, Va., but it was UNO that looked like the experienced post-season team. Kruse tallied a pair of second-half goals and Kirby had a goal and an assist. UNO ran out 3-1 winners and moved on

to the national title game to face Christian Brothers, 1-0 overtime winners over Metropolitan State.

Missy Gregg, a Division I transfer to CBU and the nation's leading scorer with 61 goals, opened the scoring in the final, but Kruse answered back with her 24th goal of the year. UNO's offside trap, which had worked up until that point, was beaten by Gregg, who beat the defense and set up Anna Rask for the game-winning goal.

UNO finished the season 22-1, including 7-1 against nationally ranked teams. The 22 wins set a new record, breaking the old mark of 16 wins set in 2000 and 2001. The Mavericks' defense recorded a total of 16 shutouts and allowed 10



Christian Brothers' keeper Jennifer Simon and number seven Anna Heimlund fight to keep UNO's Ashley Grace from knocking in a header late in the game.

goals all season, 13 less than the previous record. Goalkeeper Amy Price ended the season with a .039 goals against average and a .909 save percentage. On offense, the Mavs scored 78 goals total and were led by Kruse's 53 points (24 goals, five assists).

Of the players named to UNO's postseason roster, three will not be returning for the 2003 campaign. Seniors Julie Moeller, Akeisha Varnado and Kruse all completed their final seasons with the Mavericks. Those players, among the first recruited to UNO by Head Coach Don Klosterman, helped the Mavs improve from a 14-5 record in 1999 to a

national tournament finals appearance this year and an overall record of 68-16 during their tenure.



Christian Brothers' Anna Heimlund tries to slow down UNO's Stephanie Kirby.



Christian Brothers' Missy Greg knocks the game's first goal in with a header that sailed just past UNO goalie Amy Price's reach.

All photos by Chris Machian